

EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT
ROUTING SLIP

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		ACTION	INFO	DATE	INITIAL
1	DCI		X w/o att		
2	DDCI				
3	EXDIR				
4	D/ICS				
5	DDI				
6	DDA				
7	DDO				
8	DDS&T				
9	Chm/NIC				
10	GC				
11	IG				
12	Compt				
13	D/Pers				
14	D/OLL				
15	D/PAO				
16	SA/IA				
17	AO/DCI				
18	C/IPD/OIS				
19	NIO/EA		X w/att (EYES ONLY)		
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SUSPENSE		Date			

Remarks

D/ Executive Secretary
5 Sept 84

Date

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DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE


Executive Registry
84-806111

4 September 1984

NOTE FOR: David Gries
NIO for East Asia

FROM: DCI

Attached FYI.


William J. Casey

Attachment:



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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM FOR THE HONORABLE CHARLES Z. WICK

SUBJECT: US Books Abroad

The time is right for a major new commitment to the provision of US books abroad. A distinguished American publisher has written that "The American book abroad is in the vanguard of all our battles to improve our nation's present position and its future relations with all countries of the world." The power of ideas have been projected through the written word. Whether we are dealing with the "war of ideas" or looking at the problem in terms of fostering the "infrastructure of democracy"--twin goals eloquently stated by the President in London on June 1982, we must compete. Statistics have graphically demonstrated in Curtis Benjamin's book, "US Books Abroad: Neglected Ambassadors," that the United States has virtually unilaterally disarmed in this field. One simple statistic bears repeating: In 1983 the Soviet Union produced 83,000,000 highly-subsidized books for export overseas. In the same year USIA brought out 581,000 volumes in its publishing and translation program.

The problem is not simply the weakness of current federal programs. Donation programs by private American publishers have been reduced. Funds handled by quasi-public/private organizations have been cut back. We need to renovate our total approach. The Benjamin study, The Asia Foundation and the President's Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy have all spoken forcefully about the problem. What is required now is a sharply-focussed report designed to develop a coherent strategy for the long-term. This effort would best be undertaken by the establishment of a Task Force whose composition draws upon US Government expertise, the publishing sector, the academic world and the experience of those quasi-public groups such as The Asia Foundation. The study should review a number of related issues, several of which are defined below:

- What should be the size and thrust of a USIA program?
- How much translation? What pattern of distribution?

TL

-- How can we best utilize the expertise and professionalism of existing organizations, such as The Asia Foundation, the Inter-American Foundation and other groups to develop private distribution programs. We should build upon existing capabilities and experience whenever possible.

-- How can we stimulate more direct involvement of the American publishing industry?

-- What legislative and tax amelioration would be appropriate?

-- What type of book selection process is appropriate?

-- What international conditions prevail? Are programs better managed by official US involvement or by a non-government organization?

-- Develop a book distribution program to reach totalitarian states, particularly the USSR and East Europe.

-- Should we establish an International Books Council (or Foundation) as a Title VII under the State-USIA Authorization. If so, provisions should be made for public, quasi-public and private programmatic initiatives under this Title.

The "book gap" is serious. It is solvable by national commitment. We are prepared to make that commitment. I request that USIA take the lead in commissioning a comprehensive study which addresses the need, the respective roles of the private, quasi-public and public elements sectors concerned with this issue and present a comprehensive package for legislative and administrative action. I have in mind a commissioned study by an independent structure in much the same fashion as the American Political Foundation was asked to undertake the Democracy Study Project which led to the legislative package creating the National Endowment for Democracy. It would be within USIA's charter to fund the Task Force/Commission. Two organizations worth consideration to undertake the study would be the National Endowment for Democracy and the Ad Hoc Advisory Committee of the Center for the Book (Library of Congress). These organizations clearly have a role to play as does the President's Advisory Commission of Public Diplomacy and the Quasi-public sector. The Asia Foundation, for example, has done pioneer work in this field. Lastly, I would strongly urge that there be congressional representation on the Task Force. This is an issue with genuine bi-partisan support and it would be best to start out with strong Congressional support for an initiative which will presumably have legislative and budgetary ramifications.

The study group should be formed immediately and I would like to see the study completed by 1 July with precise recommendations for budget, legislative actions and organization. In addition, a timetable for implementing actions should be included. I would request that USIA work the action in conjunction with the IIC.

The U.S. Disarms in the Book Distribution Race

By JAMES E. LYONS

American books abroad, once regarded by foreign-policy makers as important tools of international public diplomacy, have fallen on hard times.

The translation of American books into foreign languages is at an all-time low. One dramatic illustration of this development is that on the eve of the bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution, nowhere in the world is there a foreign-language edition of "The Federalist Papers" in print. Another cause for concern is the precipitous decline in book-donation programs. Since 1970, the Internal Revenue Service has allowed the same deduction for donated books as it allows for books that are shredded or thrown away. Since donating books entails the added cost of transporting them, most publishers dispose of, rather than donate, their excess inventory.

Federal programs designed to enhance the role of the book abroad have traditionally been the province of the U.S. Information Agency. Since it was founded in 1953, the agency has assisted in the publication of some 24,000 books totaling 183 million copies in 57 languages. Major programs include book publication, book translation, and the administration of USIA libraries throughout the world. Unfortunately, since the mid-1960s when agency book programs were at their zenith, funding has fallen to the extent that the programs are now functioning at a subsistence level. For example, the number of books published with agency assistance dropped to 600,000 in 1983 from a high of 12.5 million in 1965. The number of USIA libraries has fallen to 131 from 182 in 1963. Foreign visitors to agency libraries numbered 24 million in 1963 and fewer than four million a year ago. (Shorter operating hours and a shift away from general-interest collections accelerated the decline.) During the same 20-year period, the number of books in USIA libraries declined to 800,000 from 2.4 million.

Richard N. Gardner, former U.S. am-

bassador to Italy, recently wrote in the New York Times Magazine, "We seem to have forgotten the obvious truth that you don't defend national security with arms alone." Mr. Gardner argues that our neglect of public diplomacy denies American foreign policy one of our greatest sources of strength as a nation—our system of higher education and our rich, pluralistic culture. He concludes, "We are thus deliberately destroying some of our principal vehicles for influencing future generations of leaders in allied, neutral and adversary nations."

These concerns are echoed in a recent report published by the Center for the Book at the Library of Congress. "U.S. Books Abroad: Neglected Ambassadors" examines the decline of international book programs and argues that "a greater national effort is imperative as matters both of societal morality and enlightened self-interest." The report concludes that the U.S. book abroad is far more than an ordinary commercial commodity; it is in the vanguard of all our efforts to improve U.S. relations with countries around the world.

The sorry state of U.S. book programs abroad is in sharp contrast to similar programs in other Western democracies. Britain, France and Canada all place a higher priority on the dissemination of books abroad than do we. Britain, for example, has always maintained that "trade follows the book." In 1982, the British Council funded the publication of 1.8 million English-language textbooks for distribution throughout the Third World. The 84 British libraries, located around the globe, house 1.7 million books—twice as many as are housed in USIA libraries.

In the battle for men's minds, the Soviet Union floods the world with inexpensive copies of its books. For example, in 1982 the Soviets produced and distributed some 70 million volumes translated into various languages, including English. (This figure does not include books published outside the U.S.S.R. and Eastern Europe; subsi-

dies support the local publication of inexpensive pro-Soviet literature by indigenous publishers throughout the world.) In the same year, by comparison, USIA, under its translation program, generated 12.5 million books—the same number of books published by the Soviets in 1953 in the Spanish language alone.

What is shattering in these figures is the possibility, and by no means a remote one, that the Soviets may be spending more hard currency—which is to say, dollars—on their program than we, the source of those dollars, spend on ours.

Clearly, the Soviet Union views the book as a vital foreign-policy tool. Unfortunately, the U.S. government does not share that view. While funding for USIA programs has increased under the Reagan administration, public diplomacy remains the stepchild of U.S. foreign policy. The agency's 1983 budget of \$588 million is a mere 0.28% of the \$209 billion 1983 defense budget. Many supporters of increased funding for USIA agree with Undersecretary of Defense Fred Ikle, who recently remarked that a marginal hundred million dollars for public diplomacy can do more for U.S. national security than it can in the Pentagon or the State Department. Under current circumstances, however, the U.S. has unilaterally disarmed in the war of ideas.

Help may be on the way. This spring, President Reagan's national security adviser, Robert McFarlane, requested that USIA form a bipartisan group to investigate ways of strengthening the role of the book abroad. Publishers, librarians, educators, and others who, in Barbara Tuchman's words, view books as carriers of civilization eagerly await the panel's report this fall.

Mr. Lyons is vice president of University Press of America Inc., which he says has no financial interest in these programs. He is a member of the USIA Book and Library Advisory Committee.

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